

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS

XMT AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMCONSUL ASMARA

UNCLAS STATE 017055

INFORM CONSULS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:ILO, AORG

SUBJECT: ILO AFFAIRS

REF: STATE 259540

1. AFTER LETTER OF INTENT TO WITHDRAW WAS DELIVERED TO ILO OFFICE NOVEMBER 6 (REFTEL), CABINET-LEVEL COMMITTEE AND ILO WORKING GROUP WERE FORMED. BOTH GROUPS HAVE BEEN MEETING TO CONSIDER US-ILO RELATIONS DURING NEXT TWO YEARS. ON JANUARY 21, AS RESULT RECOMMENDATIONS CABINET-COMMITTEE PRESIDENT APPOINTED AMBASSADOR LAURENCE SILBERMAN (FORMER UNDER SECRETARY OF LABOR AND SOLICITOR TO DEPARTMENT OF LABOR) TO UNDERTAKE SPECIAL MISSION AS PRESIDENT'S ENVOY ON ILO AFFAIRS. AMB. SILBERMAN (WHO CONTINUES TO SERVE AS OUR AMBASSADOR IN YUGOSLAVIA) WILL BE VISITING KEY ILO MEMBER COUNTRIES TO DISCUSS US POLICIES. POSTS WILL BE NOTIFIED OF HIS ITINERARY (SEPTTEL).

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2. TEXT OF PRESIDENTIAL LETTER:

"DEAR MR. AMBASSADOR:

I WANT TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION FOR YOUR WILLINGNESS TO UNDERTAKE A SPECIAL MISSION TO EUROPEAN CAPITALS AS MY PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE TO REVIEW OUR RELATIONS WITH THE

INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION. YOUR BACKGROUND IN LABOR AFFAIRS AND YOUR DIPLOMATIC EXPERIENCE WILL BE PARTICULARLY VALUABLE IN CARRYING OUT THIS IMPORTANT TASK.

WHEN THE UNITED STATES NOTIFIED THE ILO ON NOVEMBER 6, 1975, OF ITS INTENT TO WITHDRAW UNLESS SIGNIFICANT CHANGE TOOK PLACE, THERE WERE SEVERAL KEY ISSUES WHICH WERE, AND STILL ARE, OF GRAVE CONCERN TO US: THE EROSION OF THE TRIPARTITE PRINCIPLE ON WHICH THE ILO WAS FOUNDED; THE DENIAL OF DUE PROCESS TO SOME MEMBER STATES; THE APPLICATION IN SOME INSTANCES OF A "DOUBLE STANDARD" WHEN THE ILO CONSIDERS ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS; AND AN INCREASING TREND TOWARDS POLITICIZATION OF THE ILO. WE HAVE LONG SUPPORTED THE ILO AND ITS OBJECTIVES, AND OUR NOTICE OF INTENT TO WITHDRAW DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS DECIDED IRREVOCABLY TO TAKE THAT STEP. IT IS OUR HOPE THAT THE PROBLEMS WE SEE IN THE ILO CAN BE RESOLVED AND THAT U.S. MEMBERSHIP IN THE ORGANIZATION WILL CONTINUE. SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING OUR GOAL WILL DEPEND IN LARGE MEASURE ON OBTAINING THE COOPERATION OF OTHER MEMBERS.

IN THE COURSE OF YOUR SPECIAL MISSION, YOU SHOULD CONVEY TO THE GOVERNMENTS WITH WHICH YOU CONSULT THE IMPORTANCE AND URGENCY THAT I ATTACH TO THESE ISSUES. I HOPE THAT WHEN THE DEPTH OF OUR CONCERN IS UNDERSTOOD, OTHER ILO MEMBERS WILL JOIN WITH US IN BRINGING THE ORGANIZATION BACK TO ITS ORIGINAL GOALS AND PURPOSES.

I AM CONFIDENT THAT YOUR EFFORTS WILL HAVE POSITIVE RESULTS, AND I ASK THAT YOU KEEP ME INFORMED ON THE PROGRESS OF YOUR MISSION.

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SINCERELY,

GERALD R. FORD" SISCO

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